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ABSTRACT

Formal schooling is less than 100 years old in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut. In the last three decades, efforts to reflect and value Inuit culture in northern schools have increased, in light of concerns over whether the dominant culture's education system was appropriate or effective for Inuit children. These efforts have resulted in varying "adaptations" to the Euro-Canadian school, but it is uncertain whether schools based on a Western model can be adapted effectively to meet the needs of indigenous peoples. Interviews and informal conversations about such adaptations were conducted with 28 educators in five communities in Kivalliq region, Nunavut. Almost all participants were southern Canadians. Participants reported very few instances where community input was solicited, noted as desired, or used in determining a school's direction, and few instances where schools explicitly taught Inuit values. Many examples were given of incorporating "Inuit curricula" into schools, and many practices were documented in which teachers attempted to structure classroom interaction to mirror cultural expectations of Inuit students. The most common adaptations reported did not directly move schools toward Inuit culture, but reflected the reality of the English-as-a-second-language environment. Recommendations focused on community ownership of schools, indigenous teachers, hiring practices and cross-cultural orientation for non-Inuit teachers, and development of bilingual culturally sensitive curricula and materials. (Contains 64 references.) (Author/SV)

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Adaptations of Euro-Canadian Schools to Inuit Culture in Selected Communities in Nunavut

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Abstract

This paper describes a study which explored educators' perceptions of current and desired adaptations of Euro-Canadian schools to Inuit culture in five communities in one region of Nunavut. Participants in the study reported very few instances where community input was solicited, noted as desired, or used in determining the direction of the schools, and few instances where schools explicitly taught Inuit values. Many examples were given of incorporating 'Inuit curricula' into schools, and many practices were documented which were educators' attempts to structure classroom interaction in ways that mirror the cultural expectations of Inuit students. Many changes were also reported which are in fact current Southern practices, teaching ESL methods, or strategies designed to respond to the effects on students of societal problems. These changes may have increased school effectiveness, but did not move them toward Inuit culture.

To increase the success of well-being of Inuit students, the main recommendations from this study were: 1) to increase community ownership of schools through meaningful consultation, 2) to increase the number of Inuit educators in schools, and to support them in remaining Inuit rather than adopting Euro-Canadian ways of being/teaching, 3) to base the hiring of teachers for Northern schools on their orientation towards change and their ability to work with people, rather than on their academic qualifications, 4) to create an orientation to Inuit culture, learning styles, and communication patterns for new teachers hired from the South, and to inservice teachers on cultural and ESL issues and strategies, 5) to create and effectively distribute relevant, culturally sensitive curricula and resources in Inuktitut and (ESL sensitive) English, and, 6) to create policy which encourages teachers to prioritize the meeting of students' needs.

Background

Formal schooling is less than one hundred years old in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut (Van Meenan, 1994). Euro-Canadian schools, when they arrived, superimposed Southern educational

traditions on the previously existing Inuit system of education (Douglas, 1994). As with most of the colonial policies pursued in Arctic North America, this schooling was often aimed at the assimilation of northern indigenous peoples into the mainstream (Lipka & Stairs, 1994). Due to the size and power of the institution, assimilation is often the result of transplanting schools from dominant-culture to minority-culture settings, even if it is not an explicit goal (Henze & Vanett, 1993). The difficulty for Inuit in maintaining cultural identity during formal schooling occurs at least in part because "formal education is not only alien to Inuit culture but, as initially transposed from the south, is in direct conflict with indigenous modes of transmitting knowledge across generations" (Stairs, 1988, p. 315).

Over the last four decades awareness about the potential damage to students' self-esteem and school performance when the school does not reflect and value their native culture has been growing (Bennett, 1999). In Nunavut, "Canada's Inuit ... experience persistent, disproportionate academic failure" (Wright, Taylor & Ruggiero, 1996, p. 734), although they do not arrive at school lacking intelligence, nor develop it more slowly once in school (Wright et al.). This failure, then, may be attributable to " the dysfunctional effects of a EuroCanadian education system of service delivery for Aboriginal and Inuit people" (Binda, 1999, p. 87).

Should Euro-Canadian schools be abandoned all together in the Canadian Arctic? At the 1983 Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the general assembly passed a resolution "that our educational systems are to prepare our children for life based on values and skills from the Inuit culture and the western culture" (cited in Stairs, 1991, p. 290). This is a mandate for some form of Euro-Canadian schooling to continue to exist.

In light of concerns over the appropriateness and efficacy of imposing the dominant-culture's system of education on the Inuit, efforts to reflect and value Inuit culture in Northern education have increased over the last three decades (Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly Special Committee on Education [NWT LASCE], 1982; Serkoak 1989; Northwest Territories Education,

Culture and Employment [NWTECE], 1996). These efforts have resulted in "adaptations" to the Euro-Canadian school in varying degrees and at many levels. There is no agreement in the literature as to whether schools based on a Western model can be effectively adapted to meet the needs of indigenous peoples (optimistic authors include Annahatak, 1994; Kawagely, 1995; Leavitt, 1991; Wright et al, 1996; pessimistic authors include Henze & Vanett, 1993; Kirkness, 1998).

This paper explores "adaptations" known to exist, made, or desired by some educators in Nunavut. The word "adaptations" is used to denote changes in structure, procedure, or habit from the norms of Euro-Canadian schools, as perceived by the participants. It therefore encompasses changes which move the schools toward Inuit culture, as well as changes which are 'culture neutral', and those which may move the schools away from Inuit culture.

Euro-Canadian, Southern, and Western 'school' are used synonymously to mean schools which function primarily in the ways in which schools function in the dominant culture in Canada.

Inuit Culture in Conflict with Euro-Canadian School Culture

In order to understand points of conflict between Inuit culture and Euro-Canadian school culture it is necessary to be familiar with some features of Inuit culture, and especially Inuit pedagogy which may be important in the context of schooling. It is important to note that, with the exceptions of Betsy Annahatak, who is an Inuk, Mary May Simon, who is part Inuk, and Oscar Kawagely, who is a Yup'ik Eskimo, the authors cited in this section are from the dominant-culture. Thus, it should be remembered that this description may differ significantly from one written or told by Inuit from their perspective.

Before contact with Europeans, Inuit lived a nomadic or semi-nomadic life in the Arctic regions of North America. They lived in camps which ranged from single families to many families, and subsisted by hunting, gathering, trapping and fishing (Brody, 1975). Relationships

and cooperation were very important; sharing and partnerships were vital to the survival prospects of the camps (Minor, 1992). Traditionally, Euro-Canadian schools have not been structured to value family grouping, or to emphasize relationship or cooperation.

Briggs (1998) reported that for Inuit, "to be angry with a child was demeaning; it demonstrated one's own childishness, and one older woman told me that, as an educational device, scolding was likely to cause a child to rebel" (p. 5). Being angry with a child is not seen in this way by most Southern parents and teachers.

The rhythms of traditional life were much different than the rhythm of Euro-Canadian schools or work (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996, p. 225). This can result in conflict with the school, where attendance and punctuality are often highly valued.

Inuit valued independence greatly, and as a consequence believed in not interfering with others' choices. Direct requests, even of children, were thought to be rude, and no explanation was expected to explain a person's behavior (Boult, n.d.; Minor, 1992). Unwanted behavior was dealt with in a number of indirect ways, including: ignoring the behavior, ridiculing the person, gossiping about him/her, shaming the person, and in extreme cases ostracizing him/her (Boult, n.d.; Briggs, 1998). These methods are very different from some of the normal modes of discipline in Euro-Canadian schools.

Inuit are reported to trust in authority (Annahatak, 1994; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994). This may play many roles in schools which are staffed by both Inuit and non-Inuit, and in communities where local elected bodies have only recently assumed 'control' of the schools.

Boult (n.d.) reported that Inuit admire those who reflect on a problem and solve it (p. 16), rather than coming to a hasty conclusion. This can be inconsistent with the expectation of Southern teachers who often expect quick answers. Minor (1992) reported the attitude of the Inuit, when faced with tragedy or seemingly insoluble problems, as being summed up by the word *ajurnarmat*, 'it can't be changed'. She wrote: "They simply could not waste time in

despair or yearning, because they were faced each day with the reality of finding food and shelter" (p. 53). Instead, they accepted the loss, and carried on living. Unfortunately a tendency to accept a seemingly overwhelming problem as insoluble, and meeting it with quiet resignation, can be misunderstood by Southern teachers who value "making an effort", in some cases even more than they value success.

Traditionally, Inuit children learned by observation and example, at convenient times, and as long as their interest held (Boult, n.d., p. 11) . Later, they got "strict and consistent education in matters of survival" (Minor, 1992, p. 52). Stairs (1994) contrasted the traditional Inuit educational model (*isumaqsayuq*) with the Southern educational model (*ilisayuk*). She found that Inuit passed "along knowledge through observation and imitation embedded in daily family and community activities, integration into the shared social structures being the principal goal", whereas Southern schools use "teaching which involves a high level of abstract verbal mediation in a setting removed from daily life, the skill base for a future specialized occupation being the principal goal" (pp. 281-282).

Crago (1992) found that Inuit families use language to interact in a radically different ways than language is used in Euro-Canadian schools. These difference can lead to misunderstandings, frustration, and to the inaccurate evaluation of students.

Formal assessment did not exist in traditional Inuit education, however Kawagely (1995) has pointed out that "competency had an unequivocal relationship to survival or extinction. You either had it, or you didn't, and survival was the ultimate indicator" (p. 88). This, the most 'authentic' of assessment, differs greatly from the typical testing and examination strategies employed in most Western schools.

Elders were respected for their knowledge, wisdom, and story-telling ability (Boult, n.d.; Simon, 1992), and played a key role in helping to resolve conflicts (Minor, 1992). Respect for older people is not emphasized in a meaningful way in the dominant-culture.

Boult (n.d) described Inuit culture being superbly fitted to the conditions in which it existed; there was a focus on maintaining harmony in the camp which was essential for survival in the harsh environment. When discussion and the advice of elders failed to resole disagreements, they were often settled with fist fights, wrestling matches, or song duels, after which the conflict was deemed to be finished (Boult, n.d., pp. 6, 8). The Euro-Canadian school often seeks to solve conflict amongst students by punishment or apology, very different strategies from traditional Inuit conflict resolution.

From this brief account, it can be seen that the possible points of conflict between traditional Inuit culture and the traditional culture of the Euro-Canadian school are many. Traditional Inuit culture began to change rapidly after contact with whalers, explorers and traders, a process which accelerated with the arrival of missionaries and government personnel in the Arctic, largely during the first half of the 20th century (Van Meenan, 1994). Residential schools, of which there was one in the region currently under study, often alienated children from their culture and families (Tompkins, 1998). Beginning in the 1950s the Canadian government moved families away from their camps and into settlements (Tester & Kulchyski, 1994).With permanent housing replacing seasonal dwellings, wage labor competing with subsistence hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering, snowmobiles replacing dog teams, the advent of schools, and cable television bringing images of the South to the North, Inuit culture has undergone rapid change. This has resulted in "an incongruity of cultural values" within Inuit culture (Sampath, 1992, p. 146). The 'new' communities are composed of extended family groupings which traditionally had limited contact with one another.

Minor (1992) described the destruction of tradition brought about by the contact of Inuit with the powerful White society, especially the loss of cultural identity, the shift from group to individual responsibility, and the alienation of youth from Elders (pp. 80, 81). When adaptations of the schools toward Inuit culture are considered, it is important to remember that

rapid change has led to confusion and the loss of traditional culture. It becomes less clear whether the schools should be adapted toward traditional Inuit culture, or toward the emerging culture of Inuit today (Henze & Vanett, 1993).

Current Directions for Success in Minority Educational Settings

In order to understand the context of individual adaptations which will be discussed, it is necessary to have an overview of how different authors believed that success should be sought in schools serving minority populations. An overview follows, with a focus on Northern educators' perspectives.

Culturally-grounded pedagogy. Lipka (1990) detailed many specific areas and ways in which the culture of the schools in Alaska could be adapted to the students' culture, increasing harmony and student achievement. In one example, by using a culturally significant activity which was taught using students' preferred learning styles and respecting Yup'ik cultural norms, a Yup'ik teacher in a Euro-American school created what Lipka called a "culturally-based classroom environment" using "culturally- grounded" pedagogy (pp. 18, 19). It was thought that using a culture-based approach would protect and nurture Yup'ik students' cultural identity while allowing for the teaching of Western knowledge.

Negotiating schooling. The necessity of negotiating the direction of schooling with people from the communities in order to gain their support and increase student achievement is stressed in the literature on schools in Arctic North America (Armstrong, Bennet & Grenier, 1997; Barnhardt, 1999; Douglas; 1994; Lipka, 1989, 1994; Stairs, 1991, 1994; Williamson, 1987). Ogbu (1992) wrote that for minority-culture students, cultural and language differences exist which "cannot be remedied through cultural infusion into the curriculum or teaching and

learning styles" (p. 6). Instead, he felt that performance was closely tied to how much students value school learning (p. 7). For Inuit students to value school learning, their communities must value the schools, something which is much more likely to occur if they are involved in defining the goals and practices of those schools.

Community control for cultural survival. Lipka (1989) went beyond the idea of consultation and community involvement in the creation of culture-based schooling, asserting that the community must initiate changes in the curriculum, as otherwise "the school still knew what was best" (p. 224). He suggested that the traditional relationship between school and community must change to one where schooling is seen "as supportive of the community's efforts to face the future—their own future in their own way" (p. 216). Similarly, Cummins (1988) wrote that "minority students will be empowered in the school context to the extent that the communities themselves are empowered through their interactions with the school" (p. 141). The need to empower communities fits with the view that schools are ultimately necessary for the cultural survival of indigenous peoples (Kawagely, 1995; Simon, 1996; Stairs, 1988, 1994).

Indigenous teachers as change agents. One promising way to reduce the incongruity between school and community cultures is through the use of indigenous teachers in Southern schools, as they understand the minority-culture and could act as bridges to the dominant-culture for their students (Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 1994; Lipka, 1990; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; McAlpine & Taylor, 1993; Stairs, 1988). This, it is thought, would increase student well-being and achievement. Indigenous professionals have also been described as crucial to the process of gathering a knowledge base and implementing programs based on indigenous pedagogy, working in close consultation with Elders (Harris, 1990; Lipka & McCarty, 1994; Stairs, 1988).

Problems may be encountered by indigenous teachers trying to teach in culturally

compatible ways within Southern schools. These include poor evaluations by Southern educators who don't understand what is happening in their classes, institutional pressure to conform, the burden of being 'cultural brokers' between native and non-native, and having to gather information and then teach it in a rapidly changing culture (Lipka, 1990; Lipka & Mohatt, 1998; Stairs, 1991). Eriks-Brophy and Crago (1994) found that indigenous teachers were able to maintain "traditional patterns of discourse" (p. 107) in their teaching when they were trained in alternative teacher education programs, thus successfully resisting pressures to conform.

Preparing students for cultural discontinuity. In the absence of changing the culture of the schools to better fit students' cultural expectations, Macias (1987) wrote of a program to help preschool Papago children learn the norms of mainstream schools while mitigating the effects of cultural discontinuity through careful structuring of the program environment. For example, mainstream rules were enforced, but this was done through calm repetition of the expectation, rather than through punishment. In this way children were still expected to adapt to the Western school, but they were 'taught' these skills in a way that respected their culture. Macias claimed that teachers in all schools could be trained to be ethnographers, which would allow them to identify and therefore better respond to their students' interactional patterns through positive interventions.

The Australian two-way schooling model. Beyond advocating Aboriginal control of schools for Aborigines, Harris (1990) developed a 'two way schooling' model in which the school would be split into an Aboriginal domain and a Western domain. It was thought that this would be the best way of teaching Western content and culture while maintaining Aboriginal culture, as it would minimize "ambiguity and confusion" (p. 121). The Western domain would "teach

English language and culture, school-type learning and survival skills, and sufficient orthodox school subjects to allow entry to high schools for those who desire it", while the Aboriginal domain would have as goals, to "strengthen Aboriginal identity and to maintain distinctively Aboriginal ways of doing, feeling, learning and believing, and to 'hold' Aboriginal knowledge" (pp. 148, 149). This, it was hoped, would allow for the goals of cultural survival and success in the dominant-culture to be realized.

Adaptations: Examples

Along with meta-level approaches to changing school cultures, efforts are made by teachers and administrators to better fit schools to local cultures and improve student performance and well-being. In this section, a brief review of prominent adaptations from the literature is presented.

Joanne Tompkins' work in Nunavut. In her book Teaching in a cold and windy place: Change in an Inuit school, Tompkins (1998) documented many adaptations which she and her colleagues made at one school in what is now Nunavut. One specific adaptation discussed by Tompkins involved increasing the number of Inuit staff. The staffing change affected programming, and the amount of Inuktitut taught increased dramatically. Effects of these changes included "strengthening Inuit language, culture, and identity in the school" (Tompkins, 1998, p. 93), and reducing staff turnover.

Tompkins secured permission to hire untrained people from the community to become teacher-trainees, with full-time teaching duties. In the hiring process, Tompkins reported a shift from desiring people who had progressed the furthest in school and who were the most literate in Inuktitut, to seeking candidates who "demonstrated above all an interest in children and good interpersonal skills". To support the teacher-trainees, Tompkins (1998) instituted staff

development where experienced teachers provided support during theme planning at biweekly meetings, and trainees met with their trainers each day after school to "*debrief and plan for the next day*" (p. 94). Tompkins stressed that Inuit and non-Inuit educators learned from each other, which suggests that this team approach was not meant to acculturate Inuit teacher trainees to the norms of the school.

In order to support all staff, Tompkins (1998) made administrative/scheduling changes including getting rid of staff meetings and initiating inservicing during lunchtime every Thursday. Her goal was to increase her staff's feeling of being a team, and to create a time when problems encountered in the multicultural environment could be addressed (p. 97). As well, she held orientation sessions for staff to explore the nature of Inuit culture (p. 103). Other similar changes included successfully lobbying the Community Education Council (now called the District Education Authority [DEA]) for bi-weekly early closures, for the aforementioned planning in teams (p. 56).

Tompkins encouraged home visits and initiated a community radio show run by students to help get the school "out into the community" (Tompkins, 1998, p. 75). In the literature on multicultural education, Moll, Amanti, Neff and Gonzalez (1992) recommended that teachers visit their students' homes to learn. This, they believed, would result in seeing students more as whole people, in changing relationships between parents and teachers, and in "contributing to the academic content and lessons" (p. 139).

Tompkins also reported that assessment changed with report cards becoming "much more anecdotal and global in nature" (1998, p. 79), while developmental-skills checklists were adopted to track student progress. Classes began to be configured to reflect family groups, rather than ability or age groupings: "For the students, family grouping modelled itself after what happens in the family and the community" (p. 69). .

Alaskan adaptations. In an Alaskan context, Jerry Lipka has described many adaptations to the Euro-American school model. They include the use of modelling, observation, apprenticeship, and the use of "non-standard school discourse routines that [result] in lively discussions" (Lipka & Mohatt, 1998, p. 135). None of these are utilized to a great degree in Southern schools.

Oscar Kawagely (1995) noted the existence of locally developed and flexible science curricula in a Yup'ik community, "a compilation of ideas for lessons [that] could be easily applied and changed by the teacher"(p. 91). This is a divergence from the standardized curricula characteristic of Euro-Canadian schools. Kawagely also documented a teacher who asked his students what they thought would be useful to know, then "pursued those paths" (p. 92).

Carol Barnhardt (1999) documented some of the adaptations made in a small Yup'ik Alaskan community, including a majority of staff being Yup'ik from the community, and the publication by the school of a daily 'bulletin'. She reported that the language of instruction in K-3/4 was Yup'ik, while the upper grade students were taught in English and received Yup'ik language classes from a Yup'ik instructor. She wrote that the local school district supported Yup'ik educators in the creation of Yup'ik language curricula and resources, and that a district-wide K-12 curriculum used thematic units throughout the year to help students "gain knowledge and skills related to Yup'ik values, beliefs, language, and lifestyles" (p. 109). As well, highschool students took a compulsory Yup'ik Life Skills class which included involving "students meaningfully in the examination and solution of some of the most important and real issues related to the daily life of people in Quinhagak" (p. 109). Class grouping and assessment also diverged from Southern norms, and family and community participation were actively solicited by the school. An 'Advisory School Board' had duties including approving program changes, identifying budget priorities, and approval of the principal.

In Nelson-Barber and Dull (1998), Vicki Dull, a Yup'ik, described modifying her teaching

from the 'clinical' style she learned as a teacher trainee, to teaching using themes familiar to her students and local experts: "Not only was the content relevant to the students, but the students were able to make meaningful connections with them using local and recognizable strategies for transmitting knowledge" (p. 96). Dull also modelled her classroom after the community, by, for example, allowing anyone to visit at any time, and gave students a voice in decisions affecting instruction in the classroom. Both of these practises fall outside the norms of Euro-American education.

Methodology

This was a survey study designed to explore the phenomenon of 'adaptations' within selected Nunavut schools. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and through informal interviews.

Site Description. Five communities in the Kivalliq region of Nunavut were used in this study. The communities ranged in size from 800 to 3500 inhabitants. On average, 90% of the population was Inuit. Most Nunavut communities share many of the characteristics of the five communities selected for this study. The nine schools in these communities predominantly employed Inuit teachers at the primary level, and Southern-Canadian teachers at the intermediate and senior levels. The schools were all based on a Euro-Canadian model (Wright et al., 1996).

Participant Selection. A convenience sample was used from the population defined as including any educators (including student-teachers) from the five communities visited who consented to a voluntary, taped interview, or who agreed to speak informally with the researcher. It was assumed that all participants who volunteered would have something to

contribute.

Twenty participants took part in fifteen taped interviews. One participant was Inuit, and nineteen were Southern-Canadians. Four were student-teachers near the end of a four week practicum. The other sixteen interviewees included educators with a wide range of subject and grade experience, including administrators. In addition to the formal interviews, eight participants spoke with the researcher casually. One of these participants was Inuit, and seven were Southern-Canadians. These participants indicated their willingness to contribute but were not interviewed formally, largely due to scheduling constraints.

Validity. The sample was small and non-random. Small samples have legitimacy in exploratory studies in areas lacking extensive research (LoBiondo-Wood & Haber, 1998). While the data could not exhaustively cover the current and desired adaptations of all educators in these schools, recurrence of themes and the participation of over 5% of the region's educators lend support to the claim that many actual and desired adaptations of educators in this region were identified..

Due to the small number of Inuit educators involved, it cannot be assumed that the views and practices of Inuit educators are adequately represented here. More research is needed, especially research conducted by or with Inuit, to find the views of Inuit educators relating to adaptations in Northern schools, and to find adaptations made or desired by Inuit educators.

Limitations. Southern-Canadian educators' ideas about adaptations to fit schools to Inuit culture would have been based on their conceptions of Inuit culture. Many of these educators had spent at most several years in Arctic Canada, and it is assumed that even long-time residents would understand Inuit culture to a far lesser degree than do Inuit, despite study, observation, and interaction. This may mean that Southern-Canadian educators'

recommendations for change are based on flawed assumptions, and would in practice be of little value.

My incomplete knowledge of Inuit culture may have limited my ability to interpret contributions, as I may fail to understand or may misinterpret the connections between an adaptation and its relationship to Inuit culture. Mitigating against this to some extent is my experience living and teaching in Nunavut (1997-1999). This experience has given me an understanding of the context of this research, although it may also be responsible for introducing biases which have limited my ability to interpret participants' contributions fairly (LoBiondo-Wood and Haber, 1998). My own lack of experience as a researcher may have limited my effectiveness in conducting interviews, limiting the breadth or depth of information which resulted.

Menzies (2001) argued that mainstream researchers may have a place studying matters involving Indigenous peoples. I believe that, while not ideal, my involvement in this research is defensible. I have attempted to be aware of my position and potential biases, and am aware of the colonial history of the North American Arctic. My goal in the research was not to find final answers, but rather to begin a discussion. It is important for the reader to remember that the frame within which the data collection and analysis took place is a Southern one, and that this paper is written in a Southern voice.

Nunavut has three distinct regions in terms of education, which were formerly administered by three different school boards. It cannot be assumed that the same adaptations are employed and desired in all three regions.

Only one Inuk volunteered to be interviewed, perhaps because the asking of direct questions may be perceived as invasive by Inuit (Boult, n.d., p. 18; Lipka, 1989). That the researcher was non-Inuit, and was only in each community for a very short period of time, may also have contributed to an unwillingness among Inuit educators to volunteer. Due to the lack of

Inuit participants it cannot be claimed that the findings represent the views of Inuit educators.

Interview Format. Interviews were conducted during a two week period in April, 2000. The interview guide was tested (March, 2000) in a pilot prior to the departure of the researcher for Nunavut. In the pilot, four interviews were conducted, each with a student-teacher from Lakehead University who had done a student teaching placement in Nunavut. It was found that even beginning teachers with limited first-hand knowledge of Inuit culture could describe adaptations they had seen, made, or desired.

Interviews were semi-structured and were scheduled to last approximately one hour. In some cases more than one participant was interviewed at the same time. At the beginning of each interview I briefly outlined my interest in the topic, and disclosed my experience as an educator in Nunavut (1997-1999). My first question was an open-ended question asking the participant to describe adaptations made in the Euro-Canadian schools to Inuit culture. I interacted with the participant(s) to broaden or deepen their responses, and to encourage the participant to explore all areas related to the first question. When a participant seemed stuck, I used probing questions to discover differences between Northern and Southern schools in the areas of curriculum, scheduling, discipline, administration, teaching strategies, class groupings and professional development. The focus of each interview evolved as participants stressed that which resonated most strongly with them.

When a participant had no more current adaptations, I asked a question pertaining to desired changes and allowed the participant to respond, asking for clarification when necessary. Finally, I asked the participants what they thought of previous participant's selected suggestions. These I selected according to how much allotted time was remaining in the interview, and what similar themes I had recognized in the participant's interview. In this way the interview questions emerged. The formal interviews were audio-taped for later analysis. One

interview was lost due to technical problems. Notes on this interview were made from memory and used as data.

The informal interviews took the form of discussions with participants who indicated that they had something to contribute. Brief notes detailing the content of these discussions were recorded following the discussions, and used as data.

Data Analysis. The data from the recorded interviews and from the informal interview notes were coded in terms of the type of adaptation toward Inuit culture that they represented. The genesis of the taxonomy used was Stairs' (1994) discussion of the 'what','how', and 'why' of schooling. Further, since many of the 'adaptations' described by participants were not, in fact, moves toward Inuit culture, they were coded and grouped into other themes which emerged.

Findings and Discussion

The minority-culture education literature reveals that *how* educators do things may be more important than *what* they teach, and suggests that negotiating the direction of the schools with the communities may be the only way for communities to feel the ownership required for them to value schooling and support it as an institution. 'Adaptations' are gathered and presented in themes which describe the type of 'adaptation', beginning with 'negotiating the direction of the schools', which explores to what extent the communities were reported to be involved in setting the direction of the schools, and to what extent Inuit values are explicitly taught in the schools. This theme corresponds roughly to Stairs 'why' of education (Stairs, 1994, p. 73). The next theme covers what Stairs called the "'what' of schooling—the choice of language instruction, content, materials" (p. 73). The third theme describes findings which fit into Stairs' "'how' of learning and teaching—attending to cultural modes of interaction" (p. 73).

Many of the current and desired adaptations which were reported were not referenced to

culture. In this study, while I set out specifically to find 'adaptations toward Inuit culture', participants reported numerous strategies for improving education that were *not* adaptations to better fit the schools to Inuit culture. Many were, however, ESL or other methods, which had the potential to improve the performance of students, the harmony in classrooms, and even students' self-esteem. Some were attempts to cope with what may, at least in part, have been the negative effects of rapid culture change and cultural dissonance. As well, a number of 'non-adaptations' were reported—Southern practices which were described as being aimed at increasing student learning. These types of strategies are presented briefly in following sections.

Not all adaptations reported are described here. The adaptations that were chosen for discussion help to illustrate a theme, were described by a participant as particularly successful, or were mentioned frequently by participants. Participants voices are reported in *italics*.

Negotiating the Direction of the Schools

According to Ogbu (1992), having parental support for schools is the most important factor in the success of students. Two principle ways in which this support might be gained emerged from the findings. In the first, initiatives which would have the effect of changing the culture of the communities toward the culture of the schools were reported. In the second, community input was solicited which helped the schools to function more in accordance with the wishes of community members. This process moved the schools toward the culture of the communities. Both of these types of adaptations, plus the presence of Elders in the schools are discussed here.

Pulling the community toward the school. There was a high level of awareness amongst the participants in this study of cultural incongruity between the school and community. In some cases it was clear that a shift of parents or students toward Euro-Canadian school values and toward valuing schooling was desired by participants, what Crago and Eriks-Brophy called a

"pressure for assimilation" (1994, p.44). One participant said that "*school still is not a high priority for some people, and how we're going to change that I'm not sure.*" Another said: "*that push that you get from the parents down South...isn't quite as ongoing as it should be up here...other things are more important to them than pushing their child through a White education system.*"

Participants appreciated that there were reasons for lack of parental support for Euro-Canadian schooling. In response to this perceived lack of support, participants described several strategies to encourage positive parental contact. These included a 'curriculum night', an 'ice cream social', activity nights with parents, inviting parents in for lunch and activities with their children, and making phone calls home to discuss performance and discipline issues. In one case a participant reported that the effort spent in meeting and contacting parents had helped to generate good relationships with parents and support from them, even in times when bad news needed to be delivered.

One participant discussed the difference in the level of structure between most Inuit homes and the school environment, and noted that a preschool was under consideration to help prepare students for the structure of school. Macias (1987) wrote of a preschool program in an American Indian community which was specifically designed to do this, while cushioning students from the worst effects of cultural friction through careful structuring of its program.

Educators' attempts to win parental support and to decrease discontinuity by preparing children for schooling can be seen as efforts to increase students' chances of success in schools. Shifting community values toward school values is the process of acculturation or assimilation, a process that may already be well advanced in northern communities (Maguire & McAlpine, 1996; Crago, Annahatak, & Ningiuruvik, 1993) . As strategies aimed at increasing student success, changes which seek to convince parents to value Euro-Canadian schooling should be considered cautiously, with the spectre of loss of cultural identity in mind.

Taking the school toward the community. One educator noted benefits of hiring many Inuit teachers onto staff. They included changing the way the community saw the school: "*It also means that the community is not viewing the school as some external force being used against them, it's their school, their people are running the school.*" Another benefit reported was the ease with which local teachers brought the school to the community, reminiscent of Stairs: "Nonnative teachers identify primarily with the formal education system and strive to bring the community into the school, while native teachers identify with their communities and strive to make the school a significant part of the students' community life" (1991, p. 288).

An example of giving voice to a community occurred when a school invited community members in to consult about the curriculum for their 'culture' program. This involvement, according to the educator who described it, led to a highly successful program. The desire for local participation in general curriculum development was expressed by another participant: "*You need people from up here who have gone through the system, people who are trying to teach them now, people who speak both languages. They have to be consulted.*"

It was also reported that a community was consulted during the creation of the discipline code at one school, and that the elected DEA created a zero tolerance policy at another. There was not enough information provided by the interviews to determine at what level the consultation took place or what motivated the DEAs to adopt what were Southern-style discipline codes.

In one report, a school employed Elders who rotated coming in for afternoons. They counselled students who were having problems, as well as whole classes, and sometimes told stories or did cultural activities. The presence of these elders in the school was reported to have motivated the students to listen more and spend less time in the halls, and it was hoped that their presence in the school would help increase students' respect for Elders. This initiative was clearly a move to incorporate Inuit values into the school. The desirability of having elders in

the school was affirmed by many participants. Elders were brought in for different purposes, including leading cultural activities, guiding, and to translate materials.

It is possible that those who reported hiring Elders to guide or lead activities might have encouraged or expected that they would transmit cultural values as they taught or led. In Lipka's (1990) exemplary Yup'ik teacher's lesson, the instruction of cultural values was a natural part of the teacher's discourse. This is most likely to occur in circumstances where community members had set the curriculum to follow the traditional things valued by Inuit, and where the 'lessons' took place with some reflection of Inuit pedagogy.

It is a concern that few examples of consultation with the community were reported, and few examples of Inuit values being taught in the schools were described. It is possible that my questions/approach tended to focus participants on the day to day business of what goes on in schools, rather than encouraging them to think of initiatives at many levels. It is possible that it was taken for granted that the schools were already under local control through the power of the elected DEAs and, therefore, believed that other consultation was not necessary.

It may also be that, in the words of one participant, the "*communities aren't really sure what they stand for*" due to the recent and rapid changes in Inuit society. In this participant's perception, there was considerable confusion in the community about what "*they*" wanted from the schools. He cautioned that with the Department of Education wanting schools to be "*more Northern than ever before*," there was a danger that "*if they make them so much 'Northern' that it takes away from standards that are already in place, people are not going to be happy with that*". He also believed that there was a "*distinction between teaching land skills and school skills, and the same with language.*" The community didn't protest, he said, when the culture program was scaled back, and most parents chose to have their children educated in English rather than in Inuktitut. Several other educators also reported ambivalence in the communities with respect to the inclusion of culture, and on the issue of language of instruction in the

schools.

This resistance to adapting the schools is also documented in the literature involving Arctic and other peoples (e.g. Harris, 1990; Stairs, 1991; Lipka & McCarty, 1994). Stairs (1988) wrote that the basis for this type of resistance might stem from an orientation that the school, as a Southern institution, should prepare students for success on Southern terms, while Inuit culture should be learned in the home. She points to two problems with this position: the fragility of Inuit language/culture as evidenced by its disappearance in Labrador and the Western Arctic, and the problem with dominant-culture institutions (especially schooling) overpowering the indigenous culture. Both of these problems are addressed if the schools are "transformed into a new Inuk form of education" (p.324).

If opposition within the communities is partly to blame for the small number of initiatives to negotiate the direction of the schools with the communities, it would be prudent to consider Jordan's (1988) argument that dominant groups don't agree on all subjects, and that ethnic groups should not be expected to either. Rather than let a lack of clear consensus lead to paralysis, it could be viewed as a further sign that open discussion is necessary.

Inuit community members may not perceive that a legitimate process exists through which they could take part in setting the direction of the schools. Douglas (1994) was unable to comprehend the frame of reference in which the Arctic Bay DEA functioned, and it might reasonably be assumed that Inuit would find it equally difficult to understand the workings of institutions created by Southerners to elicit their input. In one community the elected DEA, who have considerable authority over the functioning of the schools, had only one Inuk elected, with the balance Southerners. In several instances communities and DEAs took part in creating Southern-style codes of conduct. Consultation, it would appear, becomes less meaningful and is perhaps perceived as less necessary when both sides appear to be making the same choices.

Tompkins suggested that "the huge power imbalance between Southerners and Inuit" is

rarely discussed in the literature, and may be of central importance in relations between Southerners and Inuit, especially when it remains unacknowledged (personal correspondence, May 1st, 2001). It is also likely that the recent adoption of Western values (Crago, 1992; Maguire & McAlpine, 1996) coupled with the Inuit tendency to accept authority (Annahatak, 1994; Tester & Kulchyski, 1994), make it relatively easy for Southern educators to sway policy-making bodies toward decisions which do not reflect the desires of the majority of community members.

These mechanisms may prove very difficult to overcome without targeted efforts to involve community members, through processes like the Alaska Onward to Excellence planning process (Barnhardt, 1999), or *Satuigiarniq* (Armstrong et al. 1997).

Without greater input from the communities, Southern and Inuit educators may be left guessing as to what Inuit expect from the schools. Educators' conscious decisions to adopt or eschew adaptations that would alter the course of the schools toward Inuit culture, or reinforce their paths as Southern institutions, might be made without the authority that could be conferred upon them by the exercise of community agency. What is taught, and how it is taught, should flow from the aims of education, once they are clearly defined.

Adaptations to The 'What' of Schooling

Content, language, and materials which are adaptations toward Inuit culture are presented in this section.

Language of instruction. The most salient difference about these Arctic schools is the use of Inuktitut as the language of instruction in the primary grades, although some schools have parallel Inuktitut and English streams that parents can choose between. Students in the remaining grades receive some Inuktitut instruction each day, from an Inuit Inuktitut instructor.

Using Inuktitut in the schools is necessary in order to ensure that it remains a viable language (NWT LASCE, 1982). Children's self-esteem also benefits from instruction in their first language (Wright & Taylor, 1995), and it is thought to help in the acquisition of a second language/culture (Crago, 1992). Models where the first language is used in the primary grades and then taught as a subject thereafter can also be found in Alaska (Barnhardt, 1999) and northern Quebec (Wright et al., 1996).

Curriculum and resources. Many of the participants expressed frustration with the existing curriculum, stating that it was culturally inappropriate, and/or that it didn't match the students' abilities. Different initiatives such as the creation of a course called the Geography of Nunavut were reported, and several mentioned that students enthusiastically received the inclusion of Inuit stories and writing in English language arts programs.

Inuuqatigiit: the curriculum from the Inuit perspective (Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment [NWTECE], 1996), a K-12 curriculum document, is an adaptation noted by several participants. It is a guide to traditional skills and knowledge that students are expected to acquire at each grade level. A participant said that ample funds were available to hire guides and Elders to support teaching from Inuuqatigiit, but acknowledged that "*it takes a lot of work outside the classroom to organize those things.*" One educator noted that "*we are becoming quite good at adjusting curriculum to meet students' needs*", but also spoke of needing more Inuit content: "*now that we have the Department of Education... they should realize that Inuuqatigiit is just the beginning, you know, we need a lot more.*"

Many people expressed the desire for more and better curricula in Inuktitut. One questioned why there is no Inuktitut equivalent to the Western Language Arts Curriculum. More comprehensive curricula in Inuktitut, it was thought, would lead to Inuit teachers spending less time planning from scratch, and an increase in the ability of schools to hire Inuit teachers.

Another said that curricula in Inuktitut would help Inuit teachers to teach more rigorously, and would therefore help with the transition into English.

One participant suggested that Inuit teachers could translate and use English curricula, although there were many who said that new, culturally appropriate curricula was necessary: "*if it's totally the wrong curriculum and it doesn't fit this culture, then maybe we do need to develop our own stuff*"; "*They cannot modify their current curriculum for the simple fact that it's too culturally specific to the South.*" More Northern and more Nunavut content was desired.

Complaints were made about the general unsuitability of resources as well as curricula. One participant noted that as well as translating resources into Inuktitut, materials must be 'transformed' to make them relevant in a Northern setting. Watahomigie and McCarty (1994) claimed that for the success of a Hualapai language program, it was critical that translated English language curriculum had *not* been used (p. 40). The NWT LASCE (1982) report declared as well that "Native-language teaching material cannot be prepared by merely translating existing English material" (p. 93).

Along with specific concerns about adapting curricula and resources to the needs of the students, the desire for more funding for the creation and implementation of curriculum was voiced: "*they're going to have to put some dollars out. I sound like a broken record, but I'll say forever that the North, all these little Arctic communities, that they are underfunded and under serviced education-wise in perpetuity.*"

Concerns expressed by participants about the lack of curricular relevance resonate with the literature. Van Meenen (1994) cited a 1971 study which found that students couldn't relate to the teaching materials. In 1973 The Arctic Institute of North America said that new curriculum was being developed, taking culture into account. In 1982 the NWT LASCE report recognized the gap between curriculum conception, production, and implementation (p. 34), and stated that historically, inadequate resources had been dedicated to curriculum development (p. 75). It

recommended that community members, classroom teachers, curriculum specialists, linguists and language specialists took part in curriculum development (pp. 80, 98), and noted the lack of curricula in Inuktitut (p. 81). The committee also acknowledged that local teachers "can develop useful programs and teaching materials on their own" (p. 81), and suggested that these be shared and distributed. The necessity of creating resources, and "*creating my own path*" were mentioned by many participants, although this was a default strategy, rather than one which was reported to be recognized or supported by policy structures.

Departmental exams. Several participants noted advantages to using the Alberta Departmental Exams. They included giving teachers a standard for which to aim, ensuring equal access to Southern colleges and universities, and the belief that students who graduate feel really good about themselves, knowing that they are on a par with students elsewhere in Canada. Nonetheless, the majority of comments concerning these exams were negative, with the most commonly desired adaptation being the discontinuation of their usage. Concern was expressed that the Departmental Exams were culturally insensitive and biased against ESL students: "*They won't graduate if they don't pass English 33 which is an Alberta exam. It's very culturally specific, to the south, and when it's corrected it's corrected by people who aren't even familiar [with], probably have never heard Inuktitut.*"

One proposed solution would be to have a "*Departmental for the Northern students that [is] more relevant to the North. Then the students that want to challenge the Southern ones could do so.*" One person suggested that an 'Access Program' (a one year university preparatory course similar to one in northern Quebec) could be used to replace the Departmentals, while another suggested that instead of the Departmentals, an 'equivalency rating' could be used to rate Nunavut graduates relative to Southern graduates, in the same way that equivalency ratings exist between countries. This could be used by Southern universities and colleges when

assessing Northern applicants.

It would appear that the Departmentals are completely incongruous with traditional Inuit assessment (Corson, 1992; Eriks-Brophy & Crago, 1994; Kawagely, 1995; Stairs, 1994), as well as being culturally biased and unsuited to ESL students. For these reasons I perceive the modification, replacement , or retiring of them as movements toward Inuit culture.

Adaptations to the 'How' of Learning and Teaching

Adaptations which mean that things are done more 'like Inuit do them' are presented in this section. Stairs (1994) called it "the 'how' of learning and teaching—attending to cultural modes of interaction" (p. 73).

Inuit teachers. Certainly one of the best ways to have teachers interact with students like Inuit would, is to have Inuit teachers. The desire to have more Inuit teachers, as well as barriers including a lack of Inuktitut curricula and workplace stress, were discussed by participants. As well, many benefits of having Inuit teachers on staff were described.

In 1982 the NWT LASCE report recommended prioritizing the training of Northern teachers. Crago (1992) wrote that bilingual teachers teaching in the second language would make the language transition "less abrupt and educationally hazardous" (p. 501). Many of the other advantages of having Inuit staff in Northern schools are related to their greater ability to teach in culturally compatible ways.

Despite the obvious advantages, some participants noted community concerns as well as their own reservations about Inuit teachers and the Northern Teacher Education Program [NTEP]. Delpit (1995) and Lipka (1990, 1991) explained how it is easy for dominant-culture teachers to misunderstand and therefore mis-evaluate minority-culture teachers. As well as the possibility of being mis-perceived by administrators and colleagues, Inuit teachers face the

problem of teaching within a system which has a culture, including values and practices, that can be radically different from their own. For example, some participants reported that Inuit teachers needed help with assessment. Southern-style assessment is very foreign to Inuit, and may be damaging for students and teachers (Stairs, 1988), or even "seen as a culturally offensive obsession at worst" (Corson, 1992, p. 491). It may be true that in order to assess students in a Euro-Canadian school manner, Inuit teachers need more training and support. It may also be true that Euro-Canadian school assessment norms need to be reevaluated when the school is situated in an Inuit community.

It would appear that a dichotomy exists with respect to the roles Inuit educators can play in Southern schools. They may be expected to fit into the culture of Euro-Canadian schools, serving as role models and thereby increasing student performance. This carries with it the danger that their students will be alienated by a minority teacher who acts White (Lipka & Mohatt, 1998). Alternately, their inclusion may be expected to help change the schools to better reflect Inuit culture - in this case latitude must be given for this to occur. In the latter instance, the NTEP model should not be seen as a stepping stone to full teacher accreditation programs of a Euro-Canadian nature, or the risk is run that a great deal of the benefit of hiring Inuit teachers will be lost. Eriks-Brophy and Crago (1994) credited Inuit teachers' abilities to bring traditional patterns of discourse into their classrooms in Nunavik to their experience in alternative teacher training programs in northern Quebec.

The pairing of NTEP graduates with Southern teachers, reported by participants in this study, may then be a practice which would prevent the school from adapting to Inuit culture, if the teaming is meant to help NTEP students learn to plan and teach in a Euro-Canadian way. Thus, while the increased use of Inuit teachers was desired by participants in this study, and while it holds great potential for helping the schools adapt toward Inuit culture, it should not be taken for granted that an increase in the number of Inuit educators will guarantee this outcome.

Cultural inclusion programs. In each of the three culture programs described by participants conscious efforts were made to structure the programs to be congruent with Inuit cultural norms. In one case, small groups and seasonally appropriate activities, taught by Inuit elders, were design elements chosen to make these courses truly Inuit courses. In another, community members helped to set the curriculum, and elders taught groups of 4 to 5 students: "*...we said, 'how do elder Inuit really teach?' They don't teach ... large groups of kids, they would be teaching one on one or small groups ... and they'd be demonstrating. So we totally changed our cultural inclusion program....it's been highly successful.*"

Due to their structures it would appear that both of these programs provide the possibility for culturally congruent patterns of interaction to occur. In the former, although the curriculum had been determined by outside agents, stress was reportedly placed on appropriate activities at appropriate times, in appropriate groupings, thus greatly increasing the likelihood of culturally congruent interaction between participants.

Lateness, absence, and tired students. Students arriving late to school, being frequently absent, or arriving excessively tired were noted by many participants as being problematic. A number of different approaches were reported to these 'problems'. Traditionally Inuit children learned when they chose to, and as long as their interest held (Boult, n.d.). Whether motivated by a sense of powerlessness to change the situation, or by trying to accommodate children's rights to prioritize their lives, several participants described approaches which diverged from normal Euro-Canadian school policy. They did so by attempting to work around the 'problems', rather than by trying to change them.

One participant said that she scheduled most of the academic work in the first two semesters, and tried to be outside doing seasonal things in the later spring when many children

were absent with their families out on the land. The participant also noted that she started the day relaxed academically, and made sure that students felt welcome, despite arriving late. This approach can be found in Lipka (1991), who noted that a successful Yup'ik teacher did not reprimand late students, thereby respecting the autonomy of the individual, an important cultural value.

One educator said that teachers always had something for occasional students to do when they came to school, in order to encourage them and keep them from being totally lost. Paradise (1994) described the flexibility of a Mazahua child's principal and teacher, who encouraged a child to come to school two days a week rather than drop out due to financial concerns. This, she felt, did not compromise the academic value of schooling, while it reflected the life circumstances of the student.

Flexible scheduling was also reported as a way that poor attendance was being accommodated. Highschool students could complete modules at their own speed and gain the credit when enough modules were finished. Completion of a grade could therefore span more than one school year.

It is clear that there is a wide gap between the Inuit and Euro-Canadian school cultures' valuing of time, and it is likely that no easy solution will be found to mesh the two. Harris (1990) anticipated that with Aboriginal control of schooling "what happens in terms of time and attitudes to time might be quite surprising to Western observers" (p.140). As long as there is high unemployment in many Nunavut communities, and many families' schedules are not organized around waged-labour, it is likely that lateness, poor attendance, and tiredness will remain 'problems' in the future (personal communication with Joanne Tompkins, 2001). Strategies to accommodate these can be seen as adaptations toward Inuit culture.

Timing/Pacing. Timing was reported as being adapted in two ways, with flexible modules,

that let students work at their own pace, and with accommodations which allowed more years to graduation without failure. In one community: "*...the grade 7/8 program is designed to be a three year program. Although some kids are able to complete it in two years, the majority stay in that stream for three years.*" In another, different levels of the same course were offered consecutively, until the 'advanced' course was completed and the next grade begun. Thus, areas of weakness could be addressed without students failing.

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) stressed that children learn at their own pace, and in traditional Inuit culture children observed (learned) as long as their interest held, then did something else (Boult, n.d.). Thus, allowing flexibility in timing serves to fit schools to traditional Inuit culture.

The concept of pacing, expressed by one teacher, seems also to correspond to the idea of children learning 'while their interest holds': "*...with Inuit students you should not give any activity for more than 10 to 15 minutes without completely changing it and doing something totally different....you must pace yourself with your students.*"

Creating relationship. Food was important in one participant's class, at birthdays and at least once a week. Another participant said that using first names helped to foster a 'team' feeling between staff and students, and a teacher named building rapport with her students as being valuable. Stairs (1991) wrote that in a traditional Inuit model of education, personal relationships between teachers and learners were important and the teacher should be seen as part of 'the team' (p. 284). Lipka (1990) described a successful Yup'ik teacher who had created a "familiar and comfortable environment" (p. 30), and Clifton and Roberts (1988) found that "effective teachers of Inuit students create emotionally warm and personable classroom environments" (p. 332). The sharing of food is also a traditional Inuit practice that created community and symbolized interdependence (Minor, 1992; Tompkins, 1998).

Hands-on activities and freedom. Planning lots of hands-on activities was reported as a strategy for avoiding behaviour problems. A participant reported using less structured, more 'workshop-like' activities. One respondent said that students were given more freedom and responsibility. Giving students more of an opportunity to move around and be outside was desired by two educators.

Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) provided support for the idea that learners should be free to move, stating that "learning involves the whole body" (p.14). Further, it stated that "participation and being actively involved will hold a child's interests longer than sitting at a desk doing sheetwork" (p. 24). Minor (1992) also wrote that freedom was encouraged in the Inuit culture, while Stairs (1994) noted that indigenous students often have an increased tendency towards physical movement.

Theme teaching. Two participants described using Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) to "*...run a lot of themes and hit a lot of your different objectives in language arts and science and social studies.*" Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996) was designed to be used for theme teaching. Leavitt (1991) stressed that Inuit children learn best when things are in context, not fragmented. Moving away from fragmentation is one of the ideas behind theme teaching. Barnhardt (1999) documented the use of themes by Yup'ik in Alaska, and Tompkins (1998) noted many benefits which accrued from shifting toward a theme teaching focus in her school in Nunavut. Participants in this study did not elaborate on the ways themes were being used.

Orientation/inservicing. While it may never be possible and perhaps not even desirable for Southern teachers to act like Inuit, an orientation to culture and inservicing to help Southern teachers understand their students was recommended by many.

The literature is replete with calls for an adequate orientation and ongoing inservicing to ensure that Southern teachers in the North have some understanding of Inuit culture and sound teaching approaches for use with Inuit students. In 1973 the Arctic Institute of North America reported that teachers in the North were not properly prepared to do their jobs, and called for an extension of the 2-3 week orientation period. In 1982 the NWT LASCE report recommended that an orientation period be established, the previous program having been entirely abandoned in the interim. It stated that "Southern teachers come to northern schools with little or no knowledge of the Native cultures, little or no training in cross-cultural education, little or no understanding of instruction in a second language, and unable to make use of a classroom assistant"(pp. 29, 31), resulting in discipline problems and high teacher turnover.

Stairs (1991) wrote that in the absence of a Southern teacher orientation to student learning expectations, it is the students who suffer the consequences of the rift between their prior learning experiences and the ways they must learn in school. Even if Southern teachers are not able to emulate Inuit discourse styles it is beneficial for them to learn about those patterns (Douglas, 1992; Crago, 1992). Crago worked with teachers from the Kativik School Board to help them understand and interact with their students more productively.

An orientation or inservicing is necessary for successful teaching in minority cultural settings (Crago 1992; Leavitt 1991; Roberts, Clifton & Wiseman 1989; Watahomigie and McCarty, 1994; Williamson, 1987). In one community in Nunavut, Tompkins (1998) ran orientation sessions to help her Southern staff learn about Inuit culture. While an orientation and continuing support would not ensure that teachers would be able to respond appropriately to Inuit students, the lack of them virtually guarantees that misunderstandings and frustrations will occur, and successful responses to the 'how' of learning and teaching may remain, for these teachers, an elusive goal.

Non-Adaptations to Inuit Culture

This section briefly describes strategies aimed at increasing student performance or well-being in the Euro-Canadian school. These strategies are not adaptations toward Inuit culture, but may be considered to address certain goals of educators or communities.

Strict Discipline. One participant described the need to use suspensions, or "*whatever works*" to ensure good conduct in the schools, believing that order is necessary for learning. He also described experiencing pressure from the community to not suspend students. It may be that suspension draws the anger of Inuit because it seems to skip over the steps in traditional strategies of maintaining harmony, ending with the second worst, ostracization (Boult, n.d.). Several participants independently reported the increased learning which resulted from implementing a strict discipline policy in one school.

Kigavik House. Another discipline related non-adaptation reported was the Kigavik House Behaviour Management Program. It was a transplanted Southern system which provided an alternative to suspension for disruptive students. One participant described sending students to Kigavik House to learn one skill, such as 'not throwing desks'. She said that the student would get the same work as the other students, and would have a nearly one on one student-teacher ratio while there, though s/he would miss movies, gym, and other fun class activities. Once the student had demonstrated consistent attendance, and had learned the required skill, s/he would be readmitted to the regular class. This participant reported increased attendance and improved learning for her students once two students who were intimidating others had been removed to Kigavik House.

Rewards. Three participants mentioned the use of rewards for motivation. One described her

system as "*a complicated point system, but it absolutely works*", and said that her students needed something concrete to work towards. This participant also used frequent praise.

Stairs (1994) claimed that in a traditional Inuit concept of education "direct praise and rewards for accomplishment are rare" (p. 67). Crago, Eriks-Brophy, Pesco and McAlpine (1997) wrote that when praise occurs in Inuit teachers' classrooms in northern Quebec, it is almost always directed to the whole group and not individuals. Henze and Vanett (1993) pointed out that vast conflict can ensue when students are exposed to conflicting values, such as rewards for motivation in schools, which, they wrote, was in complete contrast to traditional ways. Inuuqatigiit (NWTECE, 1996), on the other hand, said that children "were praised for their progress" (p. 14).

It may be relevant that Inuit students are thought to be more present-oriented than Southern students (Clifton & Roberts, 1988), while Euro-Canadian schools are future-oriented (Clifton & Roberts, 1988; Stairs, 1991). In the past, mistakes were more critical for Inuit children than they are in a "protected learning situation" (Stairs, 1991, p. 282), which might serve to prevent students from attempting things they don't feel confident with. Thus, while extrinsic rewards may not be culturally congruent, they may help to increase student performance by providing the 'something concrete' that Inuit youth would traditionally have had as they learned through authentic tasks and received immediate feedback from their environments (Stairs, 1991). Whether this increased performance is worth the cultural incongruity, and whether Inuit culture has already changed so much that this type of reward is now culturally compatible, are open questions.

Adaptations to the ESL Environment

The most common types of adaptations reported by participants do not directly move the schools toward Inuit culture, but reflect the reality of Northern schools as (primarily) ESL

schools, and schools where educators try to improve their students' learning and well-being using their 'teacher radar' (Paradise, 1994).

The need to 'meet the students where they are at' was reported, and although it may seem like a truism, it in reality requires courage to employ in situations where initial expectations are different from 'reality' (Kawagely, 1995), and in the absence of legitimization in policy. Tompkins (1998) noted that misjudging students' language and cognitive abilities, aiming work 'too high' or 'too low', and consequently facing severe discipline problems, are common problems of Southern teachers in Northern schools (p. 96).

Many teachers expressed frustration at the inadequacy of curriculum, resources, and training for them as educators in an ESL environment. They named a number of strategies in use which were primarily teaching ESL strategies. Repetition, speaking slowly, speaking less, choosing vocabulary carefully, explaining more thoroughly, reading out loud to the class, scaffolding, and teaching grammar were all mentioned.

"*I think what I need is probably a little help on ESL, because I started to teach like I was teaching in the South and it's not possible.*" The NWT LASCE (1982) report recommended that funding be made available for the development of ESL programs, resources, and to increase the number of professional development days to provide in-service ESL training (p. 19). The report warned that few teachers had any training in teaching ESL, that resources had primarily been intended for EFL speakers, and that "teaching English, and only English, as if it were a Native child's first language is detrimental to learning" (p. 97). Participants' views seem to suggest that little has changed in the past twenty years: "*I was not prepared for what I found when I came up here, and that was basically that these students are being treated as if they don't speak Inuktitut as a first language....I cannot follow the curriculum, they just can't do it.*"

The NWT LASCE (1982) report also stated that "teachers of every subject must, in some sense, be regarded as teachers of English as a second language" (p. 98), a sentiment echoed by a

participant: "*I may look at [the curriculum] and get ideas from it, but I certainly cannot teach the concepts, they simply don't have the vocabulary.... your main focus is the development of the language.*" Corson (1992), however, cautioned that a prime focus on literacy can serve as a disincentive to minority language learners.

Van Meenan (1994) wrote that ESL materials were created for use in Eastern Arctic classrooms, and yet many participants commented on their total absence. If such ESL materials or programs exist, many participants in this study were not aware of it.

Adaptations to the Effects of Cultural Dissonance

Several participants described or desired changes that would help the schools to deal with the effects on students of problems in their homes. Communities everywhere have problems in varying degrees, but in the Eastern Arctic some problems seem acute as Inuit struggle with the radical changes in their life circumstances which have taken place since contact with Southerners and Southern culture. Henze and Vanett (1993) reported social problems in small Alaskan villages with similar histories of colonization, and cited alcohol, drug and suicide problems as stemming from changes brought by Western influences.

One educator described a program which welcomed students back to school on Mondays by doing fun activities until the morning recess. This was designed to help those who might have experienced trauma on the weekend ease back into the school routine. It was described as highly sucessful.

Several voices called for the discarding of the present curriculum: "*...there's too many children in the North...that need to have their hearts fixed before you can start working on their brains.... I think we have to accept that and we have to throw away the curriculum.*" This educator recommended a focus on children's self-esteem.

One participant worried about the high incidence of fetal alcohol syndrome called for early

ability streaming, and the involvement of social services was desired by one educator to help the school deal with issues such as alcohol problems and abuse of children within the community. Another participant wished to get access to a child psychologist to help the school in dealing with behaviour problems that might be rooted in problems in the child's home. Following Cummins' (1988) work it would be imperative that helping professionals were specialists in Inuit culture and ESL environments to avoid prescriptive measures that might be based on misinterpretation, and that might therefore be harmful to the student. Using a school counsellor to help students was another strategy in use at one school.

Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez (1992) noted a tendency for teachers to have misconceptions about working class students' households. In Northern settings, where there is generally little contact between Southern teachers and the households of their students, beliefs about the nature and the extent of problems in the home might in some cases be exaggerated. Following Crago's (1992) work in analysing discourse patterns, it is also possible that the 'shutting down' of some students upon their return to school Monday morning may in part be a phenomenon which helps the student deal with the discontinuity between their home and school environments.

Both problems in students' homes, and the discontinuity between students' home and school lives, necessitate changes in the schools. Changes, such as the Monday morning program mentioned above, may be effective in addressing both issues.

Summary and Recommendations

Along with a great variety of strategies to increase the performance and well-being of students, some clear pictures emerged from this research. They suggest directions to move in at all levels. These are presented as recommendations.

Community Consultation. When community input was used in creating the curriculum for a

culture program, a highly successful program was reportedly created. Few participants, however, reported initiatives intended to involve the communities in helping to set the direction of the schools. In light of colonial history, the desirability of Inuit controlling Inuit education, and literature suggesting the necessity of community support for student success (Ogbu, 1992), this is a cause for concern. That elected DEAs have considerable control over the schools, yet were not reported as spearheading efforts to adapt the schools, deserves further exploration.

Regardless of the mechanisms at work here, be they colonial legacy, the lack of a valid process, or the Inuit tendency to defer to authority, it would seem prudent to investigate the processes by which the Yup'ik in one area of Alaska, and the Inuit of northern Quebec have pursued greater community involvement and control, through the *Satuigiarniq* and AOTE processes (Armstrong et al., 1997; Barnhardt, 1999). Lipka's work with the Ciulistet, involving indigenous teacher groups in consultation with community Elders, should also be examined (Lipka & Ilutsik, 1996; Lipka & McCarty, 1993). Of interest would be follow-up studies which attempt to determine if community involvement in negotiating the direction of the schools in those regions had resulted in greater parental support of the schools, and increased student performance, as hoped. Care would need to be taken to ensure that the 'increased student performance' was measured according to the goals for student performance set by the stakeholders in the processes, rather than by traditional Southern academic standards.

Meaningful involvement of Inuit community members in setting the agenda for Northern schools might result in 'schooling' which looks very different from the current model. Some of the current stakeholders' roles might be diminished or even discontinued if a model based on Inuit values was created. At this time in history, when a predominantly Inuit government has recently been created in Nunavut, the conditions may be conducive to making radical changes, if these are indicated. These prescriptions, however, are unlikely to come from processes initiated or controlled by stakeholders who have vested interests in the continuance of the system as it now

exists. They should, therefore, come from the level of the Department of Education, and include consultation with all those who are or will be involved in the process of change.

At the same time, initiatives aimed at increasing community input into the content and structuring of programs, such as the culture program described in the previous section, should be encouraged and supported by the centres of school operations, and undertaken by teachers and administrators.

Inuit teachers. While a process begins to solicit community involvement in the direction of the schools, sponsored at the Department level, I believe it is necessary to recognize immediately the potential of Inuit teachers to transform schools toward Inuit culture, and to take schools toward community acceptance. This was reported by one participant, and is found in the literature. In order to do so, they need to be supported in remaining Inuit in their communication of Inuit values, and in their ways of interacting with students.

Part of this support will involve educating Southern educators to be aware of cultural differences which they may perceive as ineffective teaching or lack of control in the classroom. The creation of teamwork amongst staff would help greatly in this process. Providing Inuit teachers with the opportunity to meet together in a forum to discuss common concerns and successes would also help to facilitate their growth and confidence. Special inservicing which seeks to inform Inuit teachers about the role that other indigenous teacher groups are playing in reconceptualizing schooling (Lipka & McCarty, 1994), would help to empower Inuit teachers, and encourage them to remain Inuit in the foreign environment of the schools.

Finally, Inuit educators should be asked how they view their roles in the schools and communities, and what they need to be effective as Inuit educators. The burden placed on Inuit educators as bridges between Euro-Canadian school culture and community culture must be recognized. As members of both the school and the community, it seems likely that Inuit

educators will figure prominently in the process of consultation which needs to take place in determining the direction of schooling in the communities.

Awareness of Cultural Issues. A finding that bodes well for the future was that participants recognized that problems arise from the clash between school and Inuit cultures. Whether they responded by trying to move the parents' beliefs toward valuing school culture, or by moving their own practice toward Inuit ways, this awareness and desire to help children learn and succeed was strongly and often eloquently expressed. The soil in which the seeds of larger change will be able to take root, may therefore be fertile.

If a path of meaningful community consultation is pursued, current educators and administrators will need to be ready for the possibility of radical change. They will need to "possess a high tolerance for ambiguity" (Kawagely, 1993, p. 161). It is my belief that participants in this study have, by and large, already accepted uncertainty and a move away from pat solutions, as evidenced by their own divergences from Southern norms in trying to teach effectively. Thus, many of the educators who took part in the study will be assets in the change process. In trying to generalize this finding, caution is in order due to the potential bias introduced by the participant selection process toward those supportive of change. While this study found teachers who are and will be supportive of change, it cannot be assumed that all educators share this goal.

Teacher attitudes are crucial in any attempt to change schools (Postman & Weingartner, 1969). In bicultural education, the attitudes of the dominant-culture teachers are perhaps even more crucial than they would ordinarily be. Reflection on one's own values and beliefs, and an openness to other cultures, are prerequisites for respectful teaching in bicultural settings (Darder, 1991, Tompkins, 1998). I recommend that hiring policies for teachers and principals follow Kawagely's guidelines (1993, pp. 161, 162), as well as Tompkins' criteria, in both cases

prioritizing attitudes over academic qualifications. In this way schools will become staffed with educators more able to work together, be flexible, accept, and facilitate positive change.

This recommendation, of course, flows largely from my 'Southern analysis'. It is entirely possible that if consulted Inuit might decide, for example, on a two-way schooling model, and desire only Southerners with high academic qualifications to staff the Southern domain, and only the most respected Inuit elders to staff the Inuit domain. Without negotiating the direction of the schools with the communities, this recommendation remains an outsider's work.

The Need for an Orientation and Inservicing. Many educators didn't feel that they have all the tools that they require to do their jobs well. The lack of an orientation to Inuit culture and the lack of training for teaching ESL students were both cited repeatedly.

I strongly recommend that an orientation period, and inservicing to prepare and support teachers for their work in schools with ESL Inuit students, be instituted. Properly programmed, these would become selling features for potential teachers from the South, many of whom are interested in teaching in the North at least in part for the experience of learning about a different culture. It is also likely that they would be cost-effective, increasing student learning, increasing staff and student well-being, and decreasing teacher turnover.

In the current climate of teacher shortages in the South, it would appear likely that well qualified Southern teachers will be even harder to find for Northern schools than they have been in the past. The draw of an orientation and ongoing support, while likely to attract more appropriate candidates, will also serve to compensate for the probable lack of extensive multicultural and ESL training in applicants' backgrounds. Inservicing is also imperative in order to address the frustrations of educators who currently teach in the North, but who feel that they are less effective than they could be.

Costs of inservicing might be reduced by approaching the DEA for early closures, or through

the Department of Education negotiating a reduction in teacher/student contact time, and a corresponding increase in professional development days allotted for inservicing. The resultant increase in teacher effectiveness would almost certainly offset the reduced instructional time, increasing student learning and well-being.

During these inservices, staffs could draw on the strengths of their members for learning about Inuit culture, and about successful teaching strategies, as did Tompkins' teachers (1998). School operations centres and the Department of Education could support staff efforts of this nature by providing itinerant consultants with extensive ESL or Northern experience to lead inservicing, or they could send staff members South, to Alaska, to northern Quebec, or to other communities with the intention that they return to teach their peers. The involvement of Southern and Inuit staff, working together in meaningful ways, could benefit all and increase the staff's sense of being part of a team.

In an age of budget cuts and under funding, effective orientation and inservicing are too important to neglect if the goal of bicultural education is to be realized. Creativity may go a long way toward reducing costs, but, ultimately, capital will be required. This should be a priority.

Curriculum and Resources. Many participants were unsatisfied with the lack of availability of relevant, culturally sensitive curricula, both in Inuktitut, and (ESL-sensitive) in English. Many related the necessity of heavily modifying curriculum, as well as creating their own curricula and resources.

The creation and existence of quality resources means little if there are no effective mechanisms in place to distribute them and ensure that educators are aware of their existence. Ideally, resources would be coupled with inservicing, and each school would maintain a library of theoretical and practical materials relevant to bicultural education in Northern settings.

Along with orientation and inservicing to increase the understanding of effective ways to

teach in ESL Inuit environments, and along with resources to further these goals, a major emphasis on the development of culturally relevant curricula and resources in both languages should be undertaken. English curricula and resources should reflect the nature of the (primarily) ESL environment in Nunavut schools.

Educators Taking Risks. Many educators reported discarding or modifying curriculum in order to meet their students' needs. This takes courage in a system that is driven by measurement and expectations if no explicit policy structures are in place to support such divergences. I recommend that teachers be officially encouraged to respond flexibly to student needs instead of to status quo ideas about what school should be. I recommend that policy statements be drafted at the Department and school operations levels which encourage principals and teachers to be flexible and creative, and to exercise their professional judgement in prioritizing the meeting of students' needs.

Conclusion

Adaptations of many types were reported to exist in Nunavut schools at many different levels. Some moved the culture of the schools toward Inuit culture, while others did not. If the people in the communities were consulted in a meaningful way and helped to set the direction of the schools, the value of the adaptations could be better assessed. In the absence of this consultation, educators' adaptations may lack the cohesion necessary to create far-reaching change.

With the recent advent of Nunavut and a new Department of Education, the time for changes which would support the forging of links between schools and communities has arrived. Once community partnership in directing the schools has been forged, educators will have the mandate to choose the adaptations that further the goals which will have been set together.

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